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Sankei:

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Tokyo Shimbun:

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YOMIURI (Top play) (Excerpts)
January 19, 2010

The 174th regular Diet session, the first regular session under the Hatoyama administration, was convened on Jan. 18. However, due to the issue of "money and politics," the timetable for the House of Representatives Budget Committee, which will deliberate on the second supplementary budget for fiscal 2009, has not yet been decided on. The Diet situation is already showing signs of the ruling and opposition parties colliding head-on.

The ruling camp, which aims to pass the second extra budget through the Diet before the end of January, insisted in a meeting yesterday of the Lower House Budget Committee that the supplementary budget is closely related to the daily lives of people. They proposed starting a basic question-and-answer session on Jan. 21 over Finance Minister Naoto Kan's policy speech.

However, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and other opposition parties did not agree with the ruling coalition's proposal, citing that the ruling camp has not yet responded to their calls made in the extraordinary Diet session held last year for intensive deliberations on the falsified political donation issue involving Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama and the relocation of U.S. Marine Corps Air Station Futenma. As a result, the meeting ended in failure. The committee members will again discuss the matter on the 19th.

The government and the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) held an executive meeting yesterday at the Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei). In the meeting, they confirmed a policy of passing the extra budget by the end of January. The DPJ's plan is for Prime Minister Hatoyama to deliver a policy speech at the end of January and for the state budget for fiscal 2010, which includes a budget for the DPJ's campaign pledges for last year's Lower House election, to clear the Diet before the end of March.

4) Party breakdown of Diet

YOMIURI (Page 1) (Full)
January 18, 2010

House of Representatives

Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), Independents 311
Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), Japan Renaissance Party (JRP) 119
New Komeito 21
Japanese Communist Party (JCP) 9
Social Democratic Party (SDP), Social Citizen's Coalition 7
Your Party 5
People's New Party (PNP) 3
Group to Protect National Interests and People's Livelihoods 3
Independents 2

House of Councillors

DPJ, New Ryokufukai, PNP, New Party Nippon 120
LDP, JRP 82
New Komeito 21
JCP 7
SDP, Group to Protect the Constitution 5

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Independents 7

5) Ozawa plans to submit to questioning by prosecutors

ASAHI (Top play) (Excerpts)
January 19, 2010

It was revealed by informed sources yesterday that Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) Secretary General Ichiro Ozawa has started making arrangements to submit to questioning by the special investigation squad of the Tokyo District Public Prosecutors in connection with allegations that his fund management organization Rikuzankai failed to declare in his political fund report 400 million yen that was used for a land purchase in 2004.

On Jan. 5, prosecutors asked Ozawa to voluntarily submit to their questioning, but he refused their request. Prosecutors made the same request on Jan. 17. Ozawa will apparently make scheduling arrangements with prosecutors through his lawyers after consulting with his lawyers on the matter.

6) Japan warns China not to violate agreement on gas field development

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Abridged)
January 18, 2010

Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada held talks with his Chinese counterpart, Yang Jiechi, in Tokyo on the 17th. He asked the Chinese minister to instruct concerned agencies to demonstrate substantial visible progress in negotiations toward conclusion of a treaty on joint development of gas fields in the East China Sea. He added that Japan would take necessary measures in case China violates the agreement, warning the Chinese side not to undertake independent development of the Shirakaba gas field.

Yang stressed China would firmly uphold the 2008 agreement on joint development of the Shirakaba gas field. Regarding the conclusion of a treaty, he only said: "I would like to continue the informal working-level discussions for promoting mutual understanding."

7) China mulls taking over refueling mission

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Abridged)
January 16, 2010

The Chinese navy is exploring the possibility of taking over the Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling mission in the Indian Ocean after its pullout, Japanese government officials revealed yesterday. If the Chinese navy actually undertakes the task, China will increase its influence on the sea lanes vital to Japan, which imports crude oil from the Middle East. The Hatoyama administration will likely come under fire for its decision to withdraw from the refueling mission.

According to government officials, the Chinese government specifies in an internal document that the Chinese navy has been conducting training in preparation for refueling activities in the Indian Ocean.

In November 2007, the MSDF's refueling mission in the Indian Ocean was suspended since the Antiterrorism Special Measures Law lapsed

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due to opposition from the then opposition Democratic Party of Japan and other opposition parties. On that occasion, Chinese military

officials informally told U.S. forces that the Chinese navy would like to take over the MSDF's refueling activities, the government officials said. At the time, the U.S. military did not accept the offer.

8) Japan, U.S. to issue joint statement today on 50th anniversary of revised bilateral security treaty

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
January 19, 2010

The governments of Japan and the United States will release a joint statement by their respective foreign and defense ministers today to mark the 50th anniversary of the signing of the revised U.S.-Japan Security Treaty. Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama and President Barack Obama will also issue statements today. The joint statement is expected to note that the Japan-U.S. security arrangements have contributed to peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region, while playing up their role in the peace and security of Japan.

The joint statement defines the Japan-U.S. alliance as an alliance contributing to the peace and security of the world beyond the bilateral framework. By stipulating the need to deepen the Japan-U.S. alliance in a multilayered fashion on the occasion of the 50th anniversary, the joint statement indicates a posture of attaching importance to the bilateral alliance. The purpose of the statement is to reacknowledge the importance of the Japan-U.S. alliance at a time when bilateral relations are strained over the relocation of the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station in Okinawa.

The governments of Japan and the United States signed the revised bilateral security treaty in 1960. Under the treaty, the United States is required to take joint action with Japan in case the latter comes under an armed attack and Japan is required to provide the U.S. military with bases. The treaty stipulates that U.S. troops are stationed in Japan for the purpose of contributing to the peace and stability of Japan and East Asia.

9) PM: Futenma resolution a touchstone of Japan-U.S. alliance

ASAHI (Page 4) (Full)

Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama told the press at his office on the 18th that resolution of the issue of the relocation of the U.S. military's Futenma airfield was essential for deepening the Japan-U.S. alliance. "If we can't resolve the Futenma issue, we can't advance Japan-U.S. security with trust," he said. "At the least, resolution of the Futenma issue by May is a touchstone, after which we will move forward."

10) SDP to officially present Guam relocation idea to Futenma panel

MAINICHI (Page 3) (Full)
January 19, 2010

Keiichi Shirato

The Social Democratic Party's (SDP) project team (chaired by House of Representatives member Kantoku Teruya) to discuss the relocation

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of the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station (in Ginowan, Okinawa Prefecture) met in the Diet building yesterday. The team decided to present as its official proposal the idea of relocating the Futenma functions to Guam to the Okinawa base issue study committee composed of the government, the SDP, and the People's New Party. Teruya and others will decide on whether to include Iwojima as a possible relocation site along with Guam after visiting Iwojima from Jan. 21.

In the meeting, the SDP's fact-finding team (led by the party's policy chief Tomoko Abe) that visited the United States on Jan. 12-16 reported that the only ones insisting that the relocation issue will result in a crisis in the Japan-U.S. alliance are the Japanese media and Japan experts in the United States. Following

this report, the project team reached the conclusion that the party should present the Guam relocation idea to the study committee, deeming that it will be possible to reach an agreement with the United States in April or later, after Washington finishes compiling the new Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR).

11) Government to dispatch SDF rescue team to quake-stricken Haiti

SANKEI (Page 5) (Full)
January 19, 2010

The government decided yesterday to dispatch an international emergency rescue team of 70 to 80 Self-Defense Force (SDF) personnel to Haiti, which was hit by a major earthquake. The SDF personnel will engage in providing medical services to the injured and controlling infectious diseases. Prior to the dispatch of the medical team, the Defense Ministry sent an advance team of 12 SDF personnel on the same day to collect information. A Japanese medical team of 25 civilians have already started rescue operations after arriving in Leogane, a city 40 kilometers west of Port-au-Prince, the nation's capital, on the afternoon of Jan. 17, local time.

12) JAL to apply for petition for protection with court under Corporate Rehabilitation Law

NIKKEI (Page 1) (Excerpts)
January 19, 2010

Japan Airlines (JAL) along with its two core group companies will apply for a petition for protection with the Tokyo District Court under the Corporate Rehabilitation Law, directly after which the government-backed Enterprise Turnaround Initiative Corporation of Japan (ETIC) will decide to provide financial assistance to the carrier. The government also intends to announce its full support for the carrier to ensure that its flight operations will not suffer. JAL will aim at reconstructing its management under the control of ETIC. The corporate turnaround body will improve JAL's financial structure, by asking financial institutions for debt write-offs and applying measures for capital reinforcement. The carrier will also streamline flight routes and cut personnel so that it can complete reconstruction by 2013.

13) JCER estimates Japan's growth rate in 2010s at 1.2 percent

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
January 19, 2010

The Japan Center for Economic Research (JCER) on Jan. 18 finalized

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the 36th mid-term economic outlook, which projects Japan's economic growth up to fiscal 2020. According to the projection, real gross domestic product (GDP) in the 2010s will remain low at 1.2 percent on average. With companies expanding their overseas production, capital spending on domestic facilities will be sluggish. Growth in employment and income will be limited. Personal consumption will also lack vitality

14) Sea Shepherd boat approaches Japanese whaling ship under disguise of Norwegian boat

SANKEI (Page 2) (Excerpts)
January 19, 2010

It has been learned as of Jan. 18 that the anti-whaling group Sea Shepherd Conservation Society's protest boat, Bob Barker, was sailing in Antarctic waters under the disguise of a Norwegian-registered ship. The Sea Shepherd has continued to obstruct the operations of Japanese whaling fleet vessels. Because the act of disguising the nationality of a ship violates the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which stipulates rules for navigation on the open sea, the Japanese government submitted photos and video of the Bob Baker taken by a Japanese whaling fleet vessel to the Norwegian government. In reaction, the Norwegian Foreign Ministry sent a letter of protest to the Sea Shepherd by the 18th.

15) METI to revise energy program

NIKKEI (Page 5) (Excerpts)
January 19, 2010

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) will revise its basic energy program, which serves as a guideline for the government's mid- to long-term energy policy. The revised program will include a basic policy direction for the next 10-20 years for such policy challenges as measures to curb global warming, a sharp rise in the prices of energy resources such as crude oil, and the securing of rare metals. The ministry will hold its first committee meeting in February of the comprehensive resources and energy research council, an advisory panel reporting to the METI minister, with the aim of drafting a review plan in May or June.

METI Minister Masayuki Naoshima will announce the plan on the 19th.

METI will look into specific measures to achieve the government's goal of cutting domestic greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent by 2020 in comparison with the 1990 level. The revised program will include measures to promote the introduction of renewable energy, such as wind-power and solar energy generation, and energy-conserving dissemination measures for offices and households, which are emitting increasing levels of carbon dioxide.

16) Poll: 70 PERCENT urge Ozawa to quit his party post; cabinet support plunges to 45 PERCENT

YOMIURI (Top play) (Abridged)
January 18, 2010

The Yomiuri Shimbun conducted a telephone-based spot nationwide public opinion survey from the evening of Jan. 16 through Jan. 17 in the wake of the arrests of Tomohiro Ishikawa, a former secretary of Democratic Party of Japan Secretary General Ichiro Ozawa and a DPJ

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lawmaker seated in the House of Representatives, and of Ozawa's former secretaries over his fund-managing body's land purchase. The approval rating for Prime Minister Hatoyama's cabinet plunged to 45 PERCENT, down 11 percentage points from the 56 PERCENT rating in the last survey conducted Jan. 8-10. The disapproval rating for the Hatoyama cabinet was 42 PERCENT (34 PERCENT in the last survey). In the survey, 70 PERCENT of respondents answered "yes" when asked if they thought Ozawa should resign from his party post to take responsibility for the money-linked scandals that developed into the arrests of his former secretaries, while 21 PERCENT said he did not need to do so. The public's severe view of Ozawa's "politics and money" problem will likely reverberate not only in the ordinary Diet session starting today but also in the future political situation.

In the breakdown of public support for political parties, the DPJ stood at 34 PERCENT, down from 39 PERCENT in the last survey. The leading opposition Liberal Democratic Party was at 20 PERCENT, up from 16 PERCENT in the last survey. Those with no particular party affiliation accounted for 33 PERCENT (35 PERCENT in the last survey).

17) Poll: Nonsupport for Hatoyama cabinet outstrips support

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Top play) (Abridged)
January 19, 2010

Kyodo News conducted a telephone-based public opinion survey across the nation on Jan. 17-18 following the arrests of Tomohiro Ishikawa, a former secretary of the ruling Democratic Party of Japan's Secretary General Ichiro Ozawa and currently a DPJ lawmaker seated in the House of Representatives, and of his former secretaries over the land deal involving Ozawa and his fund-managing body. The approval rating for Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama's cabinet was 41.5 PERCENT, showing a sharp drop of 9.3 points from the previous survey conducted Jan. 10-11. In contrast, the disapproval rating for the Hatoyama cabinet jumped 10.9 points to 41.5 PERCENT. The approval and disapproval ratings for the Hatoyama changed places for the first time since its inauguration last September.

In the survey, respondents were asked what Ozawa should do. In response to this question, a total of 73.3 PERCENT were negative about Ozawa's intention to stay on as DPJ secretary general, broken down into 39.5 PERCENT saying he should resign as DPJ secretary general and 33.8 PERCENT saying he should resign from the Diet.

In the breakdown of public support for political parties, the DPJ stood at 32.1 PERCENT, down 6.6 points from the previous survey, and was the lowest figure for the party since the Hatoyama cabinet came into office. The leading opposition Liberal Democratic Party was at 22.7 PERCENT, up 5.4 points.

18) Poll: 70 PERCENT say Ozawa should resign from his party post; cabinet support plummets to 44 PERCENT

SANKEI (Page 1) (Abridged)
January 19, 2010

The Sankei Shimbun and Fuji News Network (FNN) conducted a joint public opinion survey on Jan. 16-17, in which 70.7 PERCENT of respondents said Ichiro Ozawa, secretary general of the ruling Democratic Party of Japan, should resign from his party post in connection with the arrests of Tomohiro Ishikawa, a former secretary

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of Ozawa and now a DPJ lawmaker in the House of Representatives, and of two other former secretaries over the questionable land purchase involving Ozawa and his fund-managing body. The public approval rating for Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama and his cabinet plummeted to 44.3 PERCENT, down 6.7 percentage points from the last survey conducted Dec. 19-20 last year. The Hatoyama cabinet's support rate fell below 50 PERCENT for the first time since the administration came into office. The nonsupport rate was 40.3 PERCENT.

In the breakdown of public support for political parties, the DPJ stood at 32.4 PERCENT, down 4.8 points from the last survey. The leading opposition Liberal Democratic Party also slipped to 18.6 PERCENT.

19) Poll: 67 PERCENT call for Ozawa to resign from his party post; cabinet support spirals down to 42 PERCENT

ASAHI (Page 1) (Abridged)
January 18, 2010

The Asahi Shimbun conducted a telephone-based nationwide public opinion survey on Jan. 16-17, in which 67 PERCENT of respondents answered that Ichiro Ozawa, secretary general of the ruling Democratic Party of Japan, should resign from his party post to take responsibility for his fund-managing body's money-linked scandals that have led to the arrests of Tomohiro Ishikawa, a former secretary of Ozawa and a DPJ lawmaker seated in the House of Representatives, and of his former secretaries. The rate of public support for the Hatoyama cabinet was 42 PERCENT, down from the 48 PERCENT rating in the last survey conducted Dec. 19-20. The nonsupport rate was 41 PERCENT (34 PERCENT in the last survey). The approval and disapproval ratings were nearly the same.

Among those with no particular party affiliation, the Hatoyama cabinet's support rate was 20 PERCENT and its nonsupport rate was substantially higher at 54 PERCENT.

In the breakdown of public support for political parties, the DPJ stood at 36 PERCENT, markedly down from the 42 PERCENT rating in the last survey. However, the opposition Liberal Democratic Party's support rate also remained low at 16 PERCENT (18 PERCENT in the last survey).

20) TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 2) (Abridged)
January 16, 2010

The public approval rating for the Hatoyama cabinet was 47.1 PERCENT in a public opinion survey conducted by Jiji Press on Jan. 8-11, up 0.3 percentage points from last month, remaining almost flat. Meanwhile the disapproval rating was 32.4 PERCENT, up 2.1 points

from last month. The figure rose for the third month in a row. The rise in the nonsupport rate can be taken as reflecting such issues as the involvement of Prime Minister Hatoyama in his fund-managing body's falsification of political funds and the sudden resignation of Finance Minister Hirohisa Fujii before the ordinary Diet session.

The survey was conducted across the nation on a face-to-face basis, with a total of 2,000 persons chosen from among men and women aged 20 and over. The response rate was 66.1 PERCENT .

In the breakdown of public support for political parties, the ruling

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Democratic Party of Japan stood at 26.2 PERCENT , up 1.2 points from last month. The opposition Liberal Democratic Party was at 13.1 PERCENT , down 2.5 points. The New Komeito was at 4.3 PERCENT , up 2.2 points. Among other political parties, the Japanese Communist Party was at 1.1 PERCENT , the Social Democratic Party at 0.6 PERCENT , the Your Party at 0.4 PERCENT , and the People's New Party at 0.1 PERCENT . "None" accounted for 52.5 PERCENT .

21) Poll: 60 PERCENT support suffrage for foreigners

ASAHI (Page 38) (Excerpt)
January 19, 2010

Those who supported the idea of giving local suffrage to permanent foreign residents in Japan accounted for 60 PERCENT while 29 PERCENT expressed opposition in a nationwide opinion survey conducted by the Asahi Shimbun on Jan. 16-17.

22) Poll: 61.7 PERCENT approve of presence of Yokosuka Air Base, down 2.8 points from previous poll, reflecting growing concerns about crimes

ASAHI (Page 37) (Slightly abridged)
January 18, 2010

A survey conducted by the Yokosuka municipal government showed citizens' mixed feelings about the U.S. military presence. In the survey, 61.7 PERCENT replied that the presence of a U.S. base in the city was preferable or unavoidable, but this figure was 2.8 percentage points less than in the previous survey in November 2005.

In the survey conducted in June 2008, a questionnaire form was sent to 5,000 citizens aged over 15 in Yokosuka City, and the municipal government received 2,173 valid responses.

Asked for views about the presence of a U.S. military base in the city, 44.1 PERCENT of respondents said that the presence was unavoidable, followed by 26.3 PERCENT replying that it was undesirable and 17.6 PERCENT saying that it was desirable. Among the respondents who said the presence was desirable, those aged between 20 and 24 accounted for 31.3 PERCENT of the total, more than double the percentage of those in their 50s or 60s who gave made the same reply.

Compared with the previous survey, a significant change was seen in the reasons for judging the propriety of the base presence. Among the respondents who said the base presence was undesirable, those who cited concerns about crimes and accidents accounted for 45.2 PERCENT , up 26.9 percentage points from the 18.3 PERCENT in the previous survey.

Meanwhile, in the previous survey 45.5 PERCENT listed concerns about Japan's possible involvement in a war, but those who cited this reason was 20.7 PERCENT , a decrease of 24.8 percentage points.

In Yokosuka City, three murder cases involving U.S. military personnel occurred during a period of nearly three years between the two surveys. The survey results this time also reflect the deployment of the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier George Washington at the Yokosuka base.

23) Poll: 65 PERCENT of Nago voters opposed to Futenma relocation to Henoko

ASAHI (Page 38) (Abridged)
January 19, 2010

In Nago, Okinawa Prefecture, the campaign battle has begun for the Jan. 24 mayoral election. The city's Henoko area is where the U.S. military's Futenma airfield in the island prefecture's Ginowan city will be relocated in accordance with an intergovernmental agreement reached between Japan and the United States. In the meantime, Asahi Shimbun conducted a telephone-based poll of the city's voting population on Jan. 17-18 to probe the situation. The race has become a hot contest between Susumu Inamine, a new candidate opposing the relocation of Futenma airfield to Henoko, and Yoshikazu Shimabukuro, the incumbent mayor favoring the Futenma relocation to the site. Nearly 30 PERCENT of those polled did not reveal their voting behavior, so the situation could change.

Meanwhile, 65 PERCENT of respondents answered "no" when asked if they were in favor of the Futenma relocation to Henoko, with 16 PERCENT saying "yes." Respondents were also asked if they approved of the Hatoyama cabinet's handling of the Futenma relocation issue. To this question, 50 PERCENT answered "no," with 28 PERCENT saying "yes."

The survey was conducted jointly with the Okinawa Times and Ryukyu Asahi Broadcasting.

ZUMWALT